

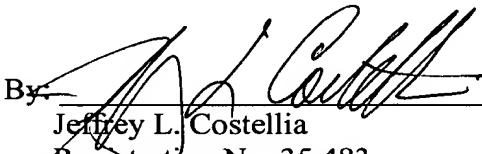
REMARKS

The non-final Office Action of May 19, 2004 has been received and carefully reviewed. Accordingly, claims 1, 10 and 13-15 have been amended, and claims 12 and 21 have been canceled; therefore, claims 1-11, 13-20, 22-25 remain pending and claims 16-20 and 22-25 have been withdrawn from further consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. Claims 1, 7-11 and 13-15 are independent. In view of the amendments above and the following remarks, further consideration of this application is now requested.

The Examiner's indication that claims 7-9 are allowed is greatly appreciated, as is the indication that claims 1-6, 10-15 and 21 are also free of the prior art and would therefore be allowable if properly amended to overcome the formality rejection, under § 112. Accordingly, in view of the above amendments to claims 1, 10 and 13-15, as well as the cancellation of claims 12 and 21, each of the Examiner's formality rejections of those claims has been addressed. It is therefore urged that claims 1-6, 10-15 and 21 are now allowable and an indication of such is earnestly solicited.

While the present application is now believed to be in condition for allowance, should the Examiner find some issue to remain unresolved, or should any new issues arise, which could be eliminated through discussions with Applicants' representative, then the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone in order that the further prosecution of this application can thereby be expedited.

Respectfully submitted,

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